ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

40 CFR Part 707

[OPPTS-120004A; FRL-4067-2]

Export Notification Requirement; Change to Reporting Requirements

AGENCY: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: EPA is promulgating amendments to its export notification rules that will change the current annual notification requirement for exporters of chemical substances and mixtures (chemicals) subject to test rules or consent orders (test rules) under section 4 of the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) to a one-time export notification requirement for each exporter of such a chemical per country of destination. EPA believes these amendments will facilitate foreign governments' review of information and appropriate consideration of chemicals exported from the United States by reducing the number of section 4 notices they receive thereby relieving them of the administrative burden imposed by the present annual notices received on chemicals subject to TSCA section 4 test rules. Additionally, these amendments are necessary to reduce the notification burden on EPA and industry. Under the current annual notice requirement, the large volume of notices received has hampered EPA's ability to respond to requests from foreign governments for additional information on a particular chemical or export notice.

EFFECTIVE DATE: This rule shall become effective on January 1, 1994.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

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SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Electronic Availability: This document is available as an electronic file on The . Federal Bulletin Board at 9 a.m. the day of publication in the Federal Register. By modem dial 202-512-1387 or call 202-512-1530 for disks or paper copies. This file is available in Postscript, Wordperfect 5.1 and ASCII.

EPA is promulgating amendments to the export notification rule (Subpart D of 40 CFR part 707) which will change the annual export notification requirement for section 4 test rule

chemicals to a one-time export notification requirement for each exporter of such a chemical per country of destination. The rule also provides that EPA will give a one-time notice to each importing country for a particular section 4 test rule chemical.

I. Authority

EPA is promulgating this amendment pursuant to section 12(b) of TSCA, 15 U.S.C. 2611(b).

Section 12(b) of TSCA requires that any person who exports or intends to export to a foreign country a chemical substance or mixture for which the submission of data is required under TSCA section 4 or 5(b), an order has been issued under section 5, a rule has been proposed or promulgated under section 5 or 6, or relief has been granted under section 5 or 7 to notify the Administrator of EPA of such exportation or intent to export. Upon receipt of such notification, section 12(b) of TSCA requires EPA to furnish the government of the importing

1. Notice of the availability of data received pursuant to action under section 4 or 5(b), or

2. Notice of such rule, order, action, or relief under section 5, 6, or 7.

EPA maintains a public record of all notices received and sent under section 12(b), except for information that has been claimed as confidential business information under TSCA section 14.

II. Background

country with:

In the Federal Register of July 12, 1989 (54 FR 29524), EPA proposed amendments to the export notification rule that would change the annual export notification requirement for section 4 test rule chemicals to a onetime notification requirement for each exporter of such a chemical per country of destination. The rule also proposed that EPA provide a one-time notice to each importing country for each particular section 4 test rule chemical. A number of comments were received in response to this proposed rule during the 60-day comment period. Some of these comments are addressed in Unit V, of this preamble, and in the record for this rule. The Agency has also prepared a more detailed discussion of the comments and EPA responses in a document titled "Disposition of Public Comments" which may be found in the public record for this rule.

III. Summary of this Final Rule

EPA is exercising its discretion by streamlining the export notice requirements of TSCA section 12(b) by requiring persons who export or who

intend to export to a specific country a chemical for which notification is required under section 12(b) by virtue of section 4 test rules to submit a one-time notice to EPA of that export for each such chemical and country. EPA is not promulgating a change in the current recurring annual export notification requirements triggered by a rule, order, action, or relief under sections 5, 6, and 7 of TSCA. EPA is neither promulgating any change in the required contents of the notice (40 CFR 707.67) nor any revision with regard to the time deadline for submission of an export notice to EPA (40 CFR 707.65(a)(3)). However, EPA is requiring that each exporter provide only one notification, per chemical, for each importing country after the issuance of a section 4 test rule. Currently, exporters are required to notify EPA annually of exports of chemicals subject to section 4 test rules.

EPA is also exercising its discretion by modifying the Agency process for notifying foreign governments of export of section 4 test rule chemicals by providing only one notice per section 4 test rule chemical to each importing country. The content of the information sent in the proposed one-time notification for section 4 test rule chemicals will be identical to that provided under the current annual notification scheme. Importing countries will get the same information on section 4 test rule chemicals, but only once.

IV. Reasons for Promulgating this Rule

A. Background

In the Federal Register of July 12, 1989 (54 FR 29524), EPA proposed amendments to the rules implementing section 12(b) of TSCA. Persons subject to these rules (40 CFR 707.60) are currently required to submit a written notice to EPA for the first export or intended export to a particular country in a calendar year for chemicals subject to a rule, order, action, or relief under sections 4, 5, 6, and 7 of TSCA. Upon receipt of such notification from an exporter, the implementing rules (40 CFR 707.70) require that EPA provide the importing country with a summary of the regulatory action taken or indicate the availability of data received pursuant to action under section 4 or 5(b), or notice of a rule, order, action, or relief under section 5, 6, or 7 of TSCA.

In 1980, when EPA promulgated the section 12(b) rules at 40 CFR part 707, EPA did not have the practical experience it now has in implementing the notification requirements. At that time, EPA did not believe that the rule

would impose an excessive burden upon foreign governments, industry, or EPA resources. However, recent experience has demonstrated to EPA that an increasing number of section 12(b) notices are received by EPA each year, and this has caused EPA to amend the section 12(b) rule so that it performs more efficiently.

In 1983, EPA received 438 section 12(b) notices on 15 substances; of this number, none were in response to section 4 test rules. That number increased to 524 notices on 37 substances in 1984 (31 in response to section 4 actions): 819 notices on 115 substances in 1985 (283 in response to section 4 actions); 2,056 notices on 166 substances in 1986 (1,506 in response to section 4 actions); and 2,367 notices on 282 substances in 1987 (1,703 in response to section 4 actions). Approximately 4,300 notices were received in 1938 (3,350 in response to section 4 actions). These numbers steadily increased throughout the next 3 years. As of September 30, 1992, approximately 12,488 notices have been received (approximately 10,500 in response to section 4 actions). For 1993, the number is expected to be greater than 15,000 (approximately 12,000 in response to section 4 actions).

The increase in section 12(b) notices received by EPA has led to a corresponding increase in the number of notices EPA has sent to foreign governments. In 1984, EPA sent 406 notices to foreign governments. This number increased to 533 in 1985; 869 in 1986; and 1,035 in 1987. The number of notices also steadily increased throughout the next 3 years. As of September 30, 1992, 3,947 notices have been sent. For 1993, the number of notices sent to foreign governments is expected to reach 4,200. This continually increasing volume of notification has created a situation in which the effectiveness of many foreign governments' import information review and monitoring programs may be hampered by the processing of more and more notices.

At the present time, one-fourth to one-half of the section 12(b) notices received by EPA from a particular company are other than first-time notices (i.e., repeat notices for subsequent annual exports to the same country). EPA anticipates that the proportion of repeat notices will grow in relation to the total number of notices received because the regulatory actions that trigger section 12(b) reporting requirements either do not sunset (e.g., section 5 or 6 rules) or remain in place for relatively long periods of time (e.g., section 4 rules). The continuous increase in section 12(b)

reporting is making import information review and monitoring more difficult for many foreign countries, is placing an increasing burden on industry, and is placing an increasing administrative burden on EPA.

EPA believes that this difficulty is based in part on the fact that importing countries believe that all notices received by them are for equally hazardous chemicals. As a result, based on inquires from importing countries, EPA believes that all notices of export are given the same level of attention by importing countries. In fact, however, the majority of section 12(b) notices sent to foreign governments pertain to TSCA section 4 test rule chemicals, which are issued because EPA does not have sufficient health and safety or environmental data on a particular chemical to make a fully informed decision regarding the appropriateness of regulatory control for that chemical. These test rules may be in effect for as long as 10 years before the end of the data reimbursement period during which time the section 12(b) export notification is triggered. EPA believes that annual reporting under section 12(b) for these chemicals is of limited value to foreign governments because such notices essentially report that EPA believes that insufficient health or environmental data on these chemicals exists.

EPA believes that the most practical means of focusing the scrutiny of importing countries on the most significant notices is to amend the section 12(b) reporting rules under 40 CFR part 707 to reduce the volume of notices. EPA believes the greatest utility to foreign governments in their efforts to protect human health and the environment is the modification of the notice requirement for section 4 test rule chemicals to allow persons to submit a one-time notice to EPA for a particular country for each section 4 test rule chemical rather than annual notices. This will also reduce the burden on both industry and EPA.

EPA believes these amendments will maintain the same, or higher, degree of protection to human health and the environment afforded by the current notification system, while reducing the reporting burden on exporters and the administrative burden on EPA. Under the current annual notice requirement, a large increase in the volume of annual notices, due primarily to a significant increase in the number of section 4 test rules promulgated by EPA, has reduced EPA's ability to respond to requests for additional information on a particular chemical or export notice. At the same time, the increasing volume of notices

makes it difficult for countries which receive a large number of notices to distinguish between chemicals for which EPA has taken action to restrict based on a determination of unreasonable risk to human health or the environment, and those chemicals for which EPA has requested data but not yet made a definitive risk determination.

EPA believes that the purpose of the export notification requirements of section 12(b) of TSCA is to ensure that foreign governments are alerted when EPA takes certain regulatory actions, and to communicate relevant information concerning the regulated chemicals. The notification and accompanying information can be used by the importing governments to assess the risks and benefits of importing and using that chemical. While some countries may use the section 12(b) notices to monitor trends in imports from the United States, EPA believes the availability of data used to evaluate chemicals within the importing country will be substantially unchanged by this rule.

By decreasing the volume of notices importing countries receive on section 4 test rule chemicals, this final rule may actually increase the relative effectiveness of the notification by allowing foreign governments to focus their efforts on notices for chemicals for which restrictive regulatory action has been proposed or promulgated under sections 5, 6, or 7.

As previously stated, EPA believes that the large volume of section 12(b) notifications triggered by section 4 has previously obscured the relative significance of these regulatory actions and decreased the likelihood of foreign governments assigning them appropriate

regulatory priority.

At the present time, EPA is in the process of implementing Prior Informed Consent (PIC), a joint United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) program. Generally under PIC, participating exporting countries will provide notice to participating importing countries prior to exporting a chemical which has been banned or severely restricted in the country of export. Under the PIC procedure, exporting countries should not export chemicals against the wishes of importing countries. The International Register of Potentially Toxic Chemicals (IRPTC) is instrumental in operating the PIC program in cooperation with UNEP and PAO; these organizations have developed a document called "Guidance for Governments" which describes how the procedure operates,

and provides interpretive material for governments to use in complying with the procedure. Information on the PIC program is included in the record of this

rulemaking.

EPA considers the UNEP/FAO PIC program to represent an international consensus regarding the operation of an export notification program and strongly supports the PIC program. At the present time, 110 nations have agreed to participate in PIC. EPA considers this amendment to the section 12(b) export notification rule to be helpful in moving the section 12(b) export notification program closer to the UNEP/FAO PIC approach in that it emphasizes notifications of exports of chemicals that are restricted in the exporting country over notification of exports of chemicals in an information-gathering

Under PIC, only chemicals which have been banned or severely restricted become part of the export notification program. This differs somewhat from the requirements of TSCA section 12(b), which are described in Unit I of this preamble. The PIC program does not require notifications for chemicals under testing actions, nor does it require notifications for proposed bans or proposed severe restrictions, as does

section 12(b) of TSCA.

EPA is following a two-step approach to ensure the mutually compatible implementation of both the section 12(b) and PIC programs. First, EPA is issuing this final rule which will bring the scope of section 12(b) reporting closer to the approach of the PIC program. However, EPA will continue to evaluate the coverage of section 12(b) with regard to implementing the PIC program, and, within the limits of statutory authority, determine whether further amendments to the section 12(b) regulations are appropriate. As the U.S. proceeds with PIC implementation, EPA would welcome any comments or observations by the public regarding additional changes to the section 12(b) rules which would improve the PIC program.

Second, when transmitting notices to foreign governments, EPA will clearly differentiate section 12(b) notices from PIC notices. Generally, this will be done as follows: unless otherwise requested by a foreign government, section 12(b) notices will be sent to the embassy of that government located in the U.S. while PIC notices will be sent to the PIC "Designated National Authority," who is located in the importing country; when a section 12(b) notice is for the same chemical as a PIC notice, each notice will reference the other; and, when section 12(b) notices are sent for

chemicals which are not PIC chemicals, those cases will be clearly identified as not "banned or severely restricted," as defined by PIC, and should not be considered part of the PIC program.

EPA intends to use section 12(b) to implement PIC to the extent possible. Most, but not all, of the chemicals the U.S. has nominated to the PIC procedure are subject to section 12(b) through their regulation under TSCA section 5 or 6. EPA will use section 12(b) reports on those chemicals to notify countries that export of a banned or severely restricted chemical is taking

place.

EPA will also use section 12(b) to monitor industry compliance with PIC. Under section 12(a) of TSCA, chemicals produced and labeled for export are excluded from TSCA jurisdiction (except sections 4 (in limited circumstances), 8, and 12(b)), unless EPA finds that the chemical will present an unreasonable risk in the U.S. In many circumstances, this exclusion will preclude the use of TSCA to prohibit the export of banned or severely restricted chemicals against the wishes of an importing country. EPA is encouraging voluntary industry compliance in not exporting banned or severely restricted chemicals against the wishes of importing countries. EPA will, however, use the recurring annual section 12(b) notification to monitor voluntary industry compliance with PIC.

V. Response to Comments

Most commenters responded favorably to an EPA alternative which suggested that a one-time notification requirement be established for all actions which trigger section 12(b) nctification. EPA believes however, that this approach could potentially hamper the ability of foreign governments to monitor and remain ewere of information regarding chemicals for which EPA has a demonstrated degree of concern. Additionally, one-time notification for chemicals which are the subjects of section 5, 6, or 7 actions would likely interfere with EPA's ability to use section 12(b) notices to monitor voluntary compliance with PIC.

In addition to the proposed alternative to extend one-time notification to all actions which trigger section 12(b) reporting, some commenters also suggested that EPA expand the proposed one-time notification to substances which are the subject of section 5(a)(2) or 5(e) actions, since sections 4 and 5(a)(2) and 5(e) are all supported by findings similar in nature. They also believed that EPA has underestimated the number of future notices it will receive.

EPA believes that sections 5(a)(2) and 5(e) actions which are based on exposure/risk concerns for identified use scenarios, "restrict" in a limited sense, regulated uses. Under section 5(a)(2) (or section 5(e) until a section 5(a)(2) significant new use rule (SNUR) is promulgated), the restriction lasts until the Agency has an opportunity to review data associated with an intended use (at least 90 days). EPA may then take action under section 5(e), 5(f), 6, or 7 to further control uses/exposures. Under section 4, toxicity or exposure concerns exist, as well as a need for data, but use is not restricted. The fact that the Agency has authority to take immediate follow-up action under section 5(a)(2) via section 5(e) and the fact that there is no similar provision under section 4 (with the exception of a separate proceeding under section 6 or 7), provides a reasonable basis for treating the export notification requirements for chemicals regulated under sections 4 and 5 differently at this time.

In addition, according to the "Guidance for Governments" document which describes the PIC procedures, certain chemicals which are subject to SNURs under TSCA section 5(a)(2) will be considered "banned or severely restricted" by the U.S. and may be subject to PIC. As previously discussed annual notification under section 12(b) will enable EPA to use the section 12(b) export notification procedure to monitor industry compliance with PIC requirements.

Some commenters maintained that EPA should establish a "percentage" cutoff for mixtures containing less than 1 percent (0.1 percent for carcinogens) of a substance for section 4 as presented in the proposed rule or, in the alternative, all export notification since reporting is not justified by potential health and environmental effects and is

extremely burdensome.

As stated in the original section 12(b) rule (45 FR 82844, December 16, 1980), "EPA does not believe that such an exemption would be wise given that some toxic substances retain their toxic or hazardous properties below a 1

percent level in a mixture.

While de minimis-type regulatory exemptions may be appropriate in many circumstances, at the present time, EPA believes that it is preferable to provide foreign countries 12(b) notifications so they have the opportunity to make their own determinations regarding what level of a chemical in mixtures is deemed important. However, if further experience with the 12(b) or PIC programs indicate that a de minimis regulatory exemption is warranted, EPA

will re-examine this option at a later time.

In addition, some commenters also responded favorably to alternatives EPA included in the proposed rule to establish new "sunset" dates for reporting under section 12(b) for chemicals triggered by a final section 4 test rule. They stated that EPA should terminate, or sunset section 12(b) requirements when section 4 reporting is complete, since EPA will have sufficient data by the end of the reporting period to decide if the chemical warrants further regulation. EPA is not adopting this alternative because the Agency believes the current sunset date (This sunset date has been established as the end of the reimbursement period as defined in section 4(b)(4).) is necessary to allow EPA sufficient time to review the data submitted and consider the subject chemical for further regulatory action. Additionally, other commenters stated that changing the sunset period would add to the complexity of the rule out of proportion to any derived benefit.

These alternatives, if adopted without a change in the context of annual reporting, would not reduce burden as much as one-time reporting. If these options were adopted in addition to a change to one-time reporting, there would be greater reductions in reporting burden than with one-time reporting alone, but the amount of the added reduction would be very minimal.

A variety of other comments were received on the proposed amendment to section 12(b). A number of these comments presented variations of the percentage cutoff alternative and others suggested modifying the format of the notification form to provide foreign governments with additional or different information. The Agency appreciates all of the submitted comments which can be found, with the Agency's response, in the Public Docket.

VI. Economic Impact

EPA is promulgating an amendment pursuant to section 12(b) of TSCA. Section 12(b) requires that EPA be notified when exporters intend to ship a chemical to a particular country if any of the following TSCA regulatory actions have been taken with regard to the exported chemical:

- 1. A final section 4 test rule.
- 2. A final section 4 testing consent agreement.
- 3. A final section 5(e) or 5(f) order or civil action.
- 4. A proposed or final section 5(b) 'risk list" rule.
- 5. A proposed or final section 5 SNUR.
 - 6. A proposed or final section 6 rule.
 - 7. A final section 7 civil action.

Over the next 5 years, this amendment would reduce section 12(b) submissions by 43 percent to 57 percent and would reduce costs to industry and the Agency by between \$843,000 and \$2,740,000. A summary of the expected decreases in section 12(b) submissions and the rescurce savings associated with this amendment are given in the following Tables 1 to 3. A more detailed discussion of the economic impact of this rule is contained in the economic analysis which may be found in the public record for this rule.

Table 1.—Summary of Submissions: 1993 to 1997

Year Notices Expected without Section 4 One- Time Reporting		Notices Expected with Section 4 One-Time Reporting	
1993	12,538	5,647 to 7,369	
1994	13,931	6,140 to 8,088	
1995	15,324	6,634 to 8,698	
1996	16,717	7,128 to 9,526	
1997	18,111	7,624 to 10,245	
TOTAL	76,621	33,173 to 44,035	

Table 2.—Resource Savings First Year: 1993

Industry Savings	Agency Savings	Total Savings
\$72,000 to \$413,000	\$83,000 to \$111,000	\$156,000 to \$525,000

Table 3.—Resource Savings
Net Present Value: 1993 to 1997

Industry Savings	Agency Savings	Total Savinys
\$369,000 to \$2,108,000	\$474,000 to \$632,000	\$843,000 to \$2,740,000

Benefits

The primary intent of the rulemaking is to reduce burden to foreign governments, EPA, and exporters while maintaining the quality of the export notifications thus allowing for better scrutiny by foreign governments. This amendment will allow foreign countries to focus their efforts on those chemicals which are generally of greater concern

by limiting the number of notifications on section 4 test rule substances. Test rules are issued primarily because there is a lack of health and environmental data on a particular chemical. As a result of this amendment, foreign countries will be able to focus their efforts on TSCA sections 5 and 6 chemicals for which more restrictive

regulatory actions have been proposed and/or promulgated.
Impact on Small Business

The amendment to reduce notification for section 4 test rule chemicals will reduce the resource expenditure burden for small business entities.

VII. Rulemaking Record

EPA has established a record for this rulemaking (docket control number

OPPTS-120004A). The record includes basic information considered by EPA in developing this final rule. The record now includes the following:

1. Proposed rule.

Economic analysis of final amendments to 40 CFR part 707.

3. Chemical Imports and Exports; Notification of Export. Federal Register, December 16, 1980 (45 FR 82844).

4. International Guidelines:

a. Decision 14/27 of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme, London Guidelines for the Exchange of Information on Chemicals in International Trade, June 17, 1987;

b. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, International Code of Conduct on the Distribution and Use of Pesticides, Rome, 1986;

c. Recommendation of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme, Concerning Information Exchange related to Export of Banned or Severely Restricted Chemicals, April 4, 1984.

Comments received on the proposed amendment to section 12(b).

6. Response to Comment document.7. PIC Guidance for Governments.

A public version of this record is available in the TSCA Public Docket Office, from 8 a.m. to noon and 1 p.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday, except legal holidays. The TSCA Public Decket Office is located in Rm. NE—G004, 401 M St., SW., Washington, DC.

VIII. Regulatory Assessment Requirements

A. Executive Order 12291

Under Executive Order 12291, EPA must judge whether a rule is "major" and therefore requires a regulatory impact analysis. EPA has determined that this final rule is not a "major" rule because it will not have an effect on the economy of \$100 million or more and will not have a significant effect on competition, costs, or prices.

This final rule was submitted to the Office of Management and Budget

(OMB) for review as required by Executive Order 12291.

B. Regulatory Flexibility Act

Under the Regulatory Flexibility Act (5 U.S.C. 605(b)), EPA has determined that this final rule will not have a significant impact on a substantial number of small businesses. This rule will decrease the reporting burden upon small businesses subject to the reporting requirements of TSCA section 12(b). This final rule will not add any economic burden to small businesses.

C. Paperwork Reduction Act

OMB has approved the information collection requirements contained in this final rule under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act, 44 U.S.C. 3501 et seq. and has assigned OMB Control Number 2070–030.

The final rule will reduce the number of notices required from the public in 1993 by approximately 5,169 to 6,892 submissions. Public reporting burden for the collection of information under 40 CFR part 707 is estimated to average .5 hour per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Total public reporting burden is expected to decrease as a result of this final rule by approximately 2,272 hours.

List of Subjects in 40 CFR Part 707

Chemicals, Environmental protection, Exports, Hazardous substances, Imports, Recordkeeping and reporting requirements.

Dated: July 7, 1993.

Carol M. Browner,

Administrator.

Therefore, 40 CFR part 707 is amended as follows:

Part 707—[AMENDED]

1. The authority citation for part 707 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 15 U.S.C. 2611(b) and 2612.

2. By revising § 707.65(a)(2) and (c) to read as follows:

§ 707.65 Submission to agency.

(a) *

- (2)(i) The notice must be for the first export or intended export to a particular country in a calendar year when data are required under section 5(b), an order has been issued under section 5, a rule has been proposed or promulgated under section 5 or 6, or an action is pending or relief has been granted under section 5 or 7.
- (ii) The notice must be for the first export or intended export to a particular country when data are required under section 4.
- (c) Notices shall be marked "Section 12(b) Notice" and sent to the TSCA Document Processing Center (TS-790), Office of Pollution Prevention and Toxics, Environmental Protection Agency, 401 M St., SW., Washington, DC 20460.
- 3. By revising § 707.70(a) to read as follows:

§ 707.70 EPA notice to foreign governments.

- (a)(1) Notice by EPA to the importing country shall be sent no later than 5 working days after receipt by the TSCA Document Processing Center of the first annual notification for each regulated chemical when data are required under section 5(b), an order has been issued under section 5, a rule has been proposed or promulgated under section 5 or 6, or an action is pending or relief has been granted under section 5 or 7.
- (2) Notice by EPA to the importing country shall be sent no later than 5 working days after receipt by the TSCA Document Processing Center of the first notification for each regulated chemical when data are required under section 4.

[FR Doc. 93-17711 Filed 7-26-93; 8:45 am] BILLING CODE 6560-50-F